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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to spotlight issues of federal aid to education (including quantities, destinations, delivery mechanisms, and rationale), and their probable effects, the Institute for Educational Leadership assembled a five-person bipartisan group of policy observers for two spontaneous discussions. This edited transcript of those sessions covers the following topics: the federal role; the state role; regulating the regulators; getting facts to policymakers; organizing the federal effort; creating new forms; policy implications of a separate Department of Education; pressures and expectations; the new department as a fresh start; and the role of the White House. Participants included Robert Andringa, Chester Finn, Michael Timpane, Thomas Wolanin, and Samuel Halperin. (LBH)

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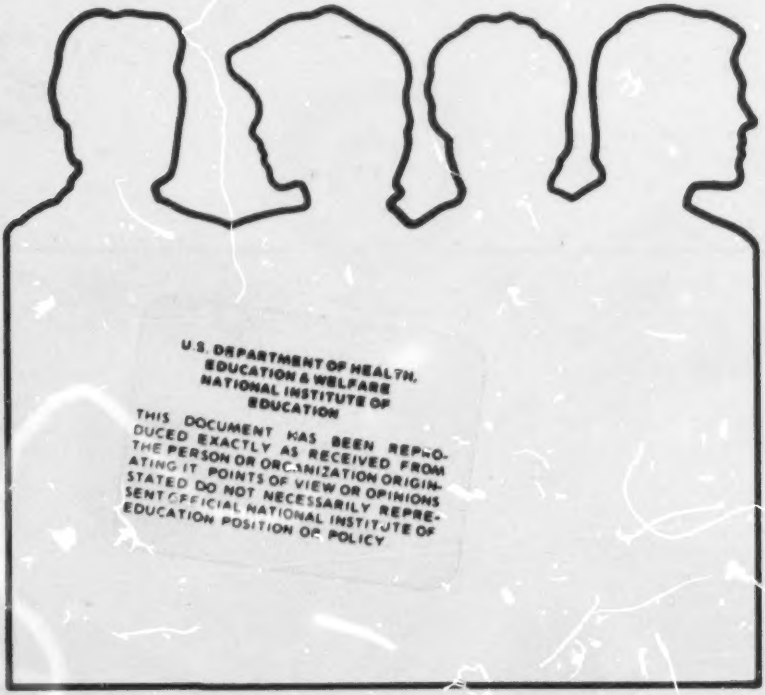
PERSPECTIVES ON FEDERAL EDUCATIONAL POLICY:
An Informal Colloquium



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The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) seeks to strengthen present and potential leadership in American education at the policy level of state and federal government. Established in 1971, IEL is a policy planning and coordinating agency for a number of related educational programs, including Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP), Educational Staff Seminar (ESS), The Associates Program (TAP), Postsecondary Education Convening Authority (PECA), a radio series over National Public Radio titled, "Options in Education," Career Education Policy Project (CEPP), Family Impact Seminar (FIS), Project on Compensatory Education (PCE), and the Ford Fellows in Educational Journalism.

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Since 1965, the program has placed over 250 mid-career persons in one-year internships in public and private agencies involved in educational policy matters. Carefully recruited sponsors who pay the Fellow's salary serve as on-the-job mentors by demonstrating, through their daily tasks, how educational policy is shaped at the urban, state, or national level. In addition, through weekly meetings, Fellows have the opportunity to interact with authorities in education. National meetings of Fellows with other special groups contribute further to their understanding of educational policymaking. Costs of recruitment, placement, and programs are borne by the EPF Program.

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Telephone: 293-3166

Educational Staff Seminar (ESS) is a professional development program designed for staff members employed by the Executive and Legislative Branches of the federal government in the field of education. It is designed to expose these federal education policymakers to existing programs worth noting around the nation, as well as to innovations, research, and emerging ideas in the field. This is accomplished through luncheon and dinner meetings, seminars, and national and international field trips.

Established in 1969, ESS is funded by the Institute and by partial reimbursement from the government agencies served. In fiscal year 1975 ESS conducted 73 programs for over 2200 federal employees.

The Associates Program (TAP)
Telephone: 785-4991

The Associates Program (TAP) is an evolving IEL activity. Its emphasis up to now has been to provide seminars for legislators and other policymakers at state capitals. Begun in 1972 with three state educational seminars, TAP now sponsors 22 seminars, all attended by Associates who, on a part-time basis, arrange five to 10 programs annually.

TAP maintains a network of state-level "generalists" (Associates) whose ties to IEL in the nation's capital provide rare linkages among federal and state education policy-setters. TAP encourages similar linkages among agencies and coalitions seeking to improve processes in state-level decision-making. It also sponsors national and regional conferences dealing with state-level responsibilities in education.

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Under a grant from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, IEL has established an issue development service for consideration and transmission of key policy issues in postsecondary education. The Postsecondary Education Convening Authority (PECA) sponsors conferences, research efforts, task force groups and publications focusing on such issues as institutional licensing, consumer protection, state financing, and adult learning.

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Telephone: 785-6462 or 833-9178

IEL and National Public Radio co-produce the "Options in Education" series, heard weekly over most of NPR's 490 member stations from coast to coast. Voice of America rebroadcasts the one-hour programs, and IEL makes cassettes and transcripts available at minimum cost. Options has received awards from the Education Writers Association (1974 and 1975) and from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (1974). Funds for "Options in Education" are provided by IEL, National Institute of Education, Robert S. Clark Foundation, NPR, and other grantors. A list of NPR member stations and a catalog of available cassettes and transcripts are available from IEL.

Career Education Policy Project (CEPP)
Telephone: 833-9051

The Career Education Policy Project (CEPP) aims the issues of education, work and society for educational decision-makers. Funded by the U.S. Office of Education, CEPP uses the resources of other IEL programs – ESS and TAP — to inform both policymakers and the public of the issues and the potential of the career education movement. It also sponsors Washington Policy Seminars for policy-level career educators.

The Project on Compensatory Education (PCE)
Telephone: 833-9178

The Project on Compensatory Education, responding to continuing state and federal emphasis on equal educational opportunity and the right of each child to an adequate education, is sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education. It will seek to identify the major public policy issues in the governance of compensatory education at the federal, state and local levels.

The project identifies strengths and weaknesses in current compensatory education governance policies, primarily by obtaining information from key policymakers, public officials, educators, as well as parents and others involved in compensatory education in the nation.

Family Impact Seminar (FIS)
Telephone: 296-5330

The Family Impact Seminar seeks to identify and assess the effect on families and children of a variety of public policies. The Seminar and its several task forces are composed of scholars and policymakers. Together, they examine and test the feasibility of developing "family impact statements" on selected governmental policies and programs. The specific issues to be examined are selected from a broad range of existing or proposed public policies. The policies may include some in such areas as education, health or welfare, which are specifically designed to help families and children. Other areas such as taxation, which are focused primarily on other objectives, but nevertheless affect families and children, also are examined.

Ford Fellows in Educational Journalism
Telephone: 833-1737

The Ford Fellows in Educational Journalism is an intensive, short-term professional development program for educational reporters and journalists. This pioneering effort offers nine Fellows a "sabbatical" from the fast-paced immediacy of daily educational reporting and allows them to pursue a full-time, four-month course of independent study in their designated educational interests areas. The program, which is supported jointly by The Ford Foundation, participating news organizations, and the Institute for Educational Leadership, reflects the conviction that better informed media will be a direct and positive influence for better education.

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Participants

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Chester E. Finn, Jr. (CF)	Research Associate, Governmental Studies Program, Brookings Institution
Samuel Halperin (SH)	Director, Institute for Educational Leadership, George Washington University
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Thomas Wolanin (TW)	Staff Director, Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations, U.S. House of Representatives.

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Foreword

Once again, as public discussion turns in this election year to the power and efficacy of Big Government, issues of federal aid to education - - quantities, destinations, delivery mechanisms, even rationale - - have returned to prominence on the public agenda. Much has changed in American education and in our ways of thinking about federal social policy, and it is timely to take a fresh look at some of the issues underlying Washington's role in the nation's educational enterprise.

Substantial federal involvement has been taken for granted, at least since 1963. Even when this involvement - - as resource, pump-primer, and trouble-shooter - - has not been of the loftiest quality, it has been welcomed, with remarkably few exceptions, by our educational institutions and by the policymakers in our system. Consensus appears to exist that Congress and the Executive Branch should be active participants in, rather than observers of, the nation's educational processes.

Far from settled, though, are the ultimate purposes and shape of this federal role. The kinds and scope of the assistance Washington should be providing remain unresolved. The locus of the power to determine the federal role has shifted - - the Johnsonian White House, the Nixonian Office of Management and Budget and the Democratic Congress. Yet, the key actor may prove to be Washington's natural partner and sometime adversary - - the states. For it is in the state capitals, now more than ever, that many of the forces that will shape national educational policy are being generated and felt.

Wherever the locus, or shared loci, of power may be, however, it is also prudent to reexamine the forms and mechanisms that characterize the federal processes. What, for example, is the case for or against creating a Department of Education? Would such an entity inhibit or spur the development of sensible national policies?

In an attempt to spotlight these issues and their probable effects, the Institute for Educational Leadership assembled a five-person bipartisan

group of policy observers for two spontaneous and, therefore, highly informal discussions on May 3 and June 3, 1976. The group included Robert Andringa, Minority Staff Director, the House Committee on Education and Labor; Chester ("Checker") Finn of The Brookings Institution; Michael Timpane of the Rand Corporation; Thomas Wolanin, Staff Director of the Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations of the House Committee on Education and Labor; and Samuel Halperin, Director of the Institute for Educational Leadership.

We hope our readers will find this single edited transcript of the two discussions to be a thoughtful, informed, and concerned expression of a common interest in strengthening American educational policy.

George R. Kaplan, Editor
Institute for Educational Leadership

The Federal Role

SH: Let's assume that a hypothetical, open-minded President-elect has asked us how to strengthen the federal role in education and, indirectly, the entire American educational system. To keep our comments within rational bounds, let's situate this President-elect as a proponent of a limited, rather than a major, federal role who believes that the resources of the federal government for deployment in the field of education will necessarily be limited for a decade or more to come.

I wonder if we could begin by stating our individual conceptions of what an appropriate federal role might be and, in doing this, address the question of how well the federal government is delivering on the various programs enacted by the Congress.

My own sense is that there really is no consensus on the federal role. Increasingly, we face a situation in which educational interest groups, the states, and legislators of various persuasions look upon the federal role as essentially only that of providing money, the more the better. Where there once was an informed debate about what was an appropriate or inappropriate role for Washington, the struggle has now turned mostly to how groups get hunting licenses for appropriations and then how they get dollars for their particular interests in education. I don't think that interest groups will actually oppose each other because they think Washington should or should not enter a particular educational arena, although they may differ about delivery provisions or about the level of funding. I have little doubt that the federal presence in education is spread too thinly over too many categorical programs. This, and a certain vagueness over what can and cannot be appropriately accomplished, has led to a kind of drift within the federal establishment. An inevitable result is that no-one can any longer gauge the potential depth and scope of federal activities in education.

MT: Our assumption that the federal role will remain limited almost eliminates the biggest decision. In my view, the present federal role, imperfect, inefficient, and duplicative as it is, is within its limitations relatively coherent. It hasn't changed very much for the last eight or ten

years. It consists of an equal opportunity objective which operates both through elementary education programs to enrich programs for disadvantaged students, and through grant and loan programs for college students from poor families. There is also consistent support for reform in educational practice - - either reform of a general, locally selective type, through programs like Title III of ESEA, or specific reforms like bilingual education, university community services or career education. Finally, the federal government supports research - - research *about* education and research *in* educational institutions. Among such programs, we may argue about relative priorities, about whether they work or not or about an adequate level of federal funding of them. But those are, by and large, the debates that I've heard during the past eight of ten years.

Now, the great change would be for someone to say "let the federal government take the responsibility of underwriting X percent of educational expenditures." That would be a big change, almost the only big change I can think of. Anything else would be telling the President how to exercise the existing federal role - - which is, as I said, a fairly sensible one, one that probably ought to be followed for at least the remainder of this decade.

TW: The big option of having the federal government underwrite a large and more significant share of education is probably the one it could best perform. Presumably, one of the lessons of the sixties was that the thing that the federal government does best is collect money from one group of people and write checks to a different group of people. The resultant services and programmatic kinds of initiatives are what are supposed to be the "failures of the Great Society." Restraining ourselves to the narrower view of the federal role, there is an economist's term, public goods, which means that you cannot restrict the benefits to those who pay for them - - like national defense or clean air.

It would seem that the federal role is most appropriate in those kinds of policies where it's not in the interest of any given state or local jurisdiction to undertake the funding of something that will be shared so broadly beyond boundaries of the state that a federal role is required.

That leads us to research and, I suppose, it leads us to some degree of support for programs with an equal opportunity, antipoverty thrust. Given population mobility and limited resources, it's very difficult for local jurisdictions to undertake the responsibility. In other words,

I agree generally that the federal role should encompass things you identify -- innovation, research, and equal opportunity.

Let me just raise one basic question: will the federal government ever have a "policy" toward education? The history of federal efforts in education has been to use education as a means to accomplish some objective other than education: to help us to win the space race, help veterans get readjusted to society, fight the war on poverty, boost agricultural productivity, or sell public lands, for example. The initial thrust of federal support for higher education was roughly equivalent to support for sewers by a developer. That is, put something attractive on the land and people will buy it. In the case of federal land policy, you put a school there. If you look at that broad history, you wonder if there is ever going to be a federal education policy or if there is going to be a hopping from policy to policy in which education is the tool to get at a real but different substantive interest.

CF: I keep rediscovering the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution and the axiom that education was one of those powers reserved to the states, not entrusted to the federal government. Yet I also keep finding, in analogous areas, the makings of a national consensus that health care and welfare, for example, are no longer going to be reserved to the states but are destined for very substantial federalization. Constitutionally, they are no different from education and yet I don't see that kind of consensus behind a substantially enlarged federal role in education. Instead, we continue to enact categorical programs tied to other goals. There are a great many of these limited programs, but they have no unity, even though from time to time an analyst may erect a corral around them and announce that he has defined the emerging federal role in education!

Yet I think it is important to keep returning to the Tenth Amendment and to recall that this is something that is reserved to the states. Why, and in what modes, should Washington buy into the educational system? What are the federal interests that override state autonomy? I see several, but it matters greatly which ones we settle on, for they dictate quite different kinds of programs. Washington can aid and abet the states in doing what they would like to do with their educational systems, that idea would lead to some kind of revenue-sharing approach. Or should Uncle Sam instead try to compensate for things states can't do? For things they won't do? Or, perhaps the federal interest

lies in trying to change the system by providing leadership such that the states will in time begin to do things differently. All of these notions have advocates in Washington, and all of them have programs as well. As yet there is little suggestion that the federal government should take over the operation of the system or the institutions that provide educational services. Instead, we leave basic responsibility for the system in the hands that it has always been in and buy into it in various ways, procuring services and seeking limited changes in multiple directions.

SH: I agree substantially with what Tom and Checker are saying. We seem to be constructing a federal role on the basis of our desire to see more order than is in fact there. If we look at the actual flow of eight billion dollars in the U.S. Office of Education, not much actually fits the categories of innovation, equal opportunity, and research. The hundreds of millions of dollars in federal vocational education funds may at one time have been primarily innovative in character, but now they are essentially a support program. The same is true with regard to Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for compensatory education. Title I was a great success in changing the priorities of educators and making them pay attention to the individual needs of disadvantaged children, but today it is essentially two billion dollars a year of support money, what was called in the old Bureau of the Budget days "fungible" money, for the total operation of school districts. P.L. 94-142, the new Equal Opportunity for All Handicapped Children Act, isn't primarily an innovative program as much as it is a regulatory or civil rights advance with a relatively small financial inducement to the states to get moving - - and a great deal more enforcement clout. So Mike, with all due respect, I like your three priorities for the federal government and would even add a fourth - - the encouragement or strengthening of educational leadership at all levels of the system. But I don't think the federal government is very clear on its priorities yet. What we've got now is a mess of programs that are very hard to squeeze into those categories.

MT: To some extent, you're right. Historically, old reforms never die. Vocational education was a great innovation when it was introduced at the federal level. That was 59 years ago, and it has been reviewed to see if that federal reform interest persists. Impact aid was a badly needed emergency measure to help localities handle thousands of kids descending on them when large new government installations were created.

How do you end programs which no longer serve their original purpose? I fully agree with Sam's last point - - the leadership function really transcends all the others. There is no way to pin dollars on it.

RA: You put your finger on one of the major problems - - how to eliminate something once it is on the books and has served its purpose. If we're talking about equal opportunity, presumably there should be accomplishable goals or objectives. And once these are met, we should be able to assume that the programs to do the job would be eliminated. But it is hard to evaluate programs because the purposes we state are so general. When are we going to eliminate illiteracy? When are we going to fulfill our obligation to the handicapped? Indeed, how do we know when a person is educated? We don't know what schools can do, really, in terms of value added or output. So we are forced to measure input. With teacher unions and with an essentially open-ended potential, the field of education is unlike other fields, such as transportation, where you know when the highway is in. You know when people can and can't get to work.

We're left with surrogate measures in education, which is almost like a hole without a bottom. For example, who can say when the need for continuing education will be met? Or how will we know when reading programs, or any of the "basics" for that matter, will have achieved their objectives? I assume the education community will simply keep pushing up the standards to create more and more need for public funds. Maybe it is good we have such a long way to go before that is a problem!

CF: The highways always have to be widened, too. Public health has virtually eliminated typhoid, so now we have to do something about cancer. The interest groups are never satisfied. The programs must continue, always bigger and better. Education is as susceptible to this mindset as anything else. We need to draw back once in a while and recognize that something may in fact have been accomplished and that it's time to redirect those limited resources to something else.

SH: I agree with your basic premise, Bob, that much of education is not measurable, at least in the short term. But another way of defining the federal role is through logical analysis. For example, if the feds don't do it, who will? And there you're left with the educational research role, which we must assume that every state, school system and college cannot perform on an effective scale. So you're left with the only

government that all Americans share in common.

This is equally true for educational leadership. Anything the federal government can do to help leadership - - both educational leadership and political - - to deal sensibly with the very difficult problems of education is money well spent. I have a lot more trouble with specific support areas, such as education about the environment, consumer education, or reading improvement, and such. I therefore tend to look at areas that are both politically feasible and manageable in size and scope. I doubt that the federal government effectively implements very many programs and, therefore, I would opt for higher levels of federal dollars spread over more limited programmatic goals. And, to state a strong personal preference, I'd want to see all such programs and goals strongly undergirded by the values and imperatives of equal opportunity.

Is that a consensus? Does any one of us think the federal dollar role should not be expanded and the number of programs greatly reduced?

TW: I'd certainly agree. Our consensus is that what once were innovative programs, like vocational education or Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, but are now just basic support programs, ought to lose federal dollars and the money then should be put into a limited number of federal programs that have a clearer, more appropriate federal emphasis. If we had a consensus on that score, it is fine, except for the political reality of achieving the phase-out of impact aid, vocational education and Title I.

MT: And the handicapped. You picked probably the four strongest lobbies, political commitments and group interests of any.

SH: Well, I wasn't proposing that they be phased out. It may well be that we ought to have a kind of federal-state agreement - - and that is another problem to come back to - - on what the major areas to be funded by the federal government should be over a five- or ten-year period. Then most of our expanding federal resources for education, assuming there are such, would be channelled primarily into those large, existing categories. Instead, every time Congress gets around to consolidating educational programs it ends up creating more new and narrow categorical programs than when it began. That has certainly been the history of the last four or five Christmas trees of omnibus education bills that have come out of the Congress.

RA: Let's consider the three broad areas of health, welfare and education, each of which is now assumed by at least two, often three, levels of government. Would it be possible to federalize one of them and, if so, which would be the best candidate? This approach could relieve the pressure on the other levels of government for more adequate funding of the other two areas.

MT: Clearly, dominant federal financing of health care and certainly of welfare is much farther along politically than major support in education. The mechanical characteristics of those programs make them more easily handled at the federal level. Moreover, they are explicitly redistributive, and therefore their direct attachment to the federal tax base is more appropriate. There are many arguments, in other words, why welfare and health financing might have higher priority than education in considering whether the national government should shoulder most of the expenses. But I think it is also true that, in a different set of political circumstances, one could argue in the opposite vein. There is no reason why the federal tax base isn't a better tax base to finance education as well as other services.

SH: The federalizing of health and welfare does not in and of itself rationalize the federal role in education or sate the appetites of those who want more federal money. In fact, as the federal role in welfare and health has been growing in recent years, so has the federal role in education. What is really needed now is an agreement among the various levels of government, a political dialogue that results in a political consensus that, for example, the federal government will do more in welfare and the states are expected to do more in education. Revenue-sharing was supposed to be a partial answer to the growing demands of the educational sector. But revenue-sharing has done nothing, in my opinion, to slow demands for additional educational funding.

Enter the States

MT: Adopting revenue-sharing isn't quite the same as developing a consensus of taking over health or welfare. Under revenue-sharing, states and localities could put the money where they wanted to; and in the states much of it goes to education. Few governors are going to be interested in accepting a limited federal role which simply assumes that they will pick up a larger share of education's cost. The only way that we can move in that direction is to pose an attractive trade-off: the federal government will get out of their hair a little bit, accept a more limited role, but fund it adequately, and assume some responsibilities for funding in other areas.

AW: To talk about a summit meeting of state and federal officials you run up against the problem of the diversity of state efforts and the variety of state priorities. The states have been characterized as little laboratories of democracy. That is to some extent true. They do put stress on a variety of areas. Some do an excellent job in community colleges, community-based education and experimental education, as in California. Others do an abominable job in that area. Some provide a very equitable distribution of funds between the public and private higher education sectors. Others have almost no private sector or ignore the public-private question entirely. I'm not sure that, even if there was rational self-interest among the collectivity of states, you could get them to all sit down and sign on to a consensus view.

SH: You're raising an issue that I alluded to earlier, which is "With whom do you negotiate a limited federal role?" What are the mechanisms or the forums in which politicians get to talk this over? I believe that there is significant imbalance in the federal system, a crisis of intergovernmental relations. Perhaps the basic cause of this crisis of federalism is the fact that it is easy for Washington to raise money relative to the states. And it's extraordinarily easy for Congressmen to pass laws because, until recently at least, they didn't have to worry about paying for the legislation they enacted.

Perhaps one of the things the federal government might consider to get greater focus on its own role and activities would be to strengthen some of the intergovernmental mechanisms that are now so weak in our system. I know that Bob Andringa and others have advocated strengthening the Education Commission of the States. That seems to me to be a worthy objective, particularly now with a new executive director coming in, new political leadership, and a new decade for the ECS. I would like to see ECS strengthened with a view toward having a friendly adversary, a voice of the states, to criticize constructively the actions of the federal government. The Education Commission of the States would then represent the predominant views in the states, not just of the educators, but of the politicians, the governors and the state legislators who have to live with the decisions made by Washington and who have to pay for the large bulk of educational costs. How does that strike you?

MT: I want to ask you, Sam, how the federal government goes about strengthening the Education Commission of the States without creating a company union. The real strength of the ECS would come from some ceding of political power and state sovereignty to this collective body.

SH: I've thought about that and have some recommendations. I think the ECS has to be strengthened by the actions of the states themselves. As you know, only eight percent of ECS's funding now comes from the states, while 85 percent comes from federal categorical grants. It's hopeless to expect that the 85 percent will suddenly be replaced by state money, but the states must do better than now. In addition, I'd suggest a "no strings" federal matching or incentive grant, conditional only on the amount of money ECS can raise from the states, from foundations and other non-federal sources. The matching might be two to one or three to one. If the federal government were to invest, say, five to ten million dollars a year at ECS, conditioned on its getting ten to 30 million dollars a year -- something like that -- ECS might over a period of time develop the services that would better serve the states and, also, the adversary forum in which they could develop enough consensus to give informed, solidly backed advice to the federal government.

TW: In another way you're saying that the amount of federal money to ECS should be conditioned on the amount of harrassment the federal government gets back in return!

SH: That might well be. I certainly wouldn't want federal appropriations to be conditioned on specific activities of ECS or on whether they "behaved properly" toward the feds. Rather, this is a kind of good faith investment in the federal system on the part of Washington. That, after all, is really the philosophy behind revenue-sharing. Not everyone is convinced to this day that revenue-sharing is wise public policy, but the national government took a plunge. It said, in effect, states and localities are with us to stay and they are important in the American form of government. They need strengthening. The same thing can perhaps be said about ECS. So, I'd like to make them eligible for a kind of no strings grant but contingent, again, on matching efforts of their own.

I wouldn't want to give them unmatched money because there is another part of my platform. Generally speaking, I don't think it's good policy to give federal grants without requiring commensurate effort on the part of the recipients. A good example of that is Title V of ESEA. That program and other federal provisions today provide from 40 to 80 percent of the total budgets of state departments of education. This year, 58 million federal dollars are being spent to strengthen state departments of education and another $121 to help them to carry out federal programs. But the state agencies don't have to get matching money from the state legislatures. As a result, legislators don't give them very much money over and above what the feds provide. That creates dependency on Washington rather than balance in the federal system. We don't want to do that; we ought to promote greater independence. So a matching program not only for ECS but for the state educational agencies is something I would propose for consideration.

MT: Maybe what we're witnessing here is that educational policymaking is finally entering the American federal system. It really has existed off by itself for most of our history - - separate jurisdications at the local level, isolated state-level administration, simple and infrequent state-level legislation. Until very recently, there wasn't a federal structure in education; instead, there were very few connections of any kind among the levels of education. Of course, education isn't the only area where the structure of federal-state-local relations is incomplete and jumbled. I wonder how rational we imagine the intergovernmental process is going to become.

SH: I don't think all issues, Mike, have the same number of tiers or layers, but even if your point is taken that it's also a mess elsewhere, where does that bring you? Are you against strengthening the intergovernmental system?

MT: You're proposing not so much a strengthening of the intergovernmental system as the ratification of a change in educational politics. In the last 10 or 15 years, the structure of local and state educational politics in elementary and secondary education has fallen apart and the profession has fragmented. The state department of education is no longer an acknowledged representative of the profession simply because no one can be the acknowledged representative of all the warring factions. These factions have taken their cases out of the old "educational" policy system to the state legislatures and have taken their cases to Washington. Now, we're beginning to realize that these new centers of educational politics need to be connected and need to talk to one another and that the old channels of educator talking to educator are manifestly antiquated and inadequate.

TW: There is a certain amount of implicit *de facto* priority-setting going on in education. Historically, the priority in this country has generally been for mass education, which is understandable in a democratic society. Thus, the field of elementary and secondary education has always enjoyed the limelight of federal concern and the highest priority in state government. As the postsecondary system has broadened and become a mass system, there is increasing government concern for it. This is also reflected in the lobbying strength of the community college two-year sector. The sector that serves the broadest segment of the population in higher education is the strongest politically. We may have reached the end point of the upward thrust of mass popular education by grade level. I'd say most of the population has a realistic chance for fourteen years of education at some point. You wonder if politically there will always be an inevitable favoritism for elementary and secondary. When you talk about strong lobbies and interest groups in education, you're not talking about higher education. You're talking about elementary and secondary education, which will always have the broadest mass base.

SH: I think you're right in that it suggests a fifth federal role, which is to worry about those aspects and clients of education that do not have political clout. In other words, one role for the federal government is not only to disturb the comfortable but to comfort the disturbed.

Our graduate schools, we recognize, are national resources serving the entire nation. And if they are in trouble we have to worry about them at the federal level; otherwise who else will? But I wonder if we could focus back on intergovernmental relations before we get into specific programmatic options and alternatives.

RA: Apart from financing, for states to become a stronger partner in the whole process, it seems to me that a President would have to assume a stronger disposition to consult with the states and with ECS. And Congress would have to be far more aware than it is now of the state role. But ECS has not even been persuaded yet to have a legitimate Washington office. Even now, state leaders are questioning whether or not they need full-time staff in an ECS Washington office. So they still have a philosophical question about their role in federal politics.

On the Hill it is difficult and it takes considerable time and energy to sit down and understand the diversity among the states. It is far more common to side-step the confusion by settling on a federally run program or going directly to the institutions. When we do opt for a state role, we too often impose one method to which all states must adjust. We make the mistake of assuming all states are alike and will approach their functions in the same way. We need to be more flexible, I think, in setting out goals in federal law that each state can pursue in its own fashion.

SH: There is another aspect of that, Bob. Both the Executive Branch and the Congress need to change their perception of what they mean by "the states". In education, for example, it is not enough to speak only with the chief state school officers or state commissioners of higher education. Can't we find some ways, while we're thinking about strengthening intergovernmental relations mechanisms, to strengthen the governors and the legislatures who are ultimately responsible for educational services in their states? Now I'm not about to propose another matching grant program to give every governor a policy analysis service and give every legislature a competent staff. But some of that is really desirable, perhaps essential, if federalism is to work properly.

Perhaps the inauguration of the new President can serve to redefine purpose and relationships. Certainly one necessary ingredient for having a real dialogue is to have a more nearly equal partner. But there's no equal partner if the governors and the legislatures don't take an adequate interest in the area of education. This is, after all, the largest

single area of expenditure of state funds. So, while state education agencies are strengthened, some attention should be given to improving governor's offices and legislatures. And, at the minimum, we need to reconstruct the hearing process on Capitol Hill and in HEW so that the governors and the legislators have genuine input. It's absurd and inadequate for us to listen *only* to the views of professional educators. They have a very powerful voice and ought to, but political leaders have an essential role, too.

RA: Here you run into the problem that governors are more general in their knowledge and views than is often necessary for education policy debates. A governor can't begin to address himself to sections and subsections of the five hundred federal programs affecting education. He's usually thinking in much more general conceptual terms.

Moreover, there is no good forum on the Hill for some of these needed discussions, because the jurisdictional authority for education in the Congress is split among three or four dozen subcommittees, none of which necessarily wants to stir the waters and get outside of its own narrow jurisdiction.

MT: What you're talking about, Sam, leads me to characterize the history of federal education policymaking in two phases - - crisis and siege. In the "crisis", the programs had to be developed as quickly as they possibly could; in the "siege" times, the programs had to be protected as well as they possibly could be. What you are saying is that a new President might want to start a new kind of dialogue, a dialogue which has never existed, which arises from neither crisis nor siege.

CF: I'm all for more dialogue, for improved intergovernmental relations and for strengthened intermediary organizations, but I remain doubtful that a "rational solution" will come about through such means. I see the states saying to Washington that they'll cheerfully take federal money for any and all purposes. The income is largely "fungible" and it lightens their own tax burden. The educators take a somewhat different and more particular point of view. They're not saying "We'll take your money for anything you want to give it to us for." They're saying "we have some things for which we want money, and the states don't adequately support us, so here is our shopping list." The governors would just as happily settle for federalization of welfare or health. Such gross political forces tend to militate against rational solutions of

education policy. I think the federal government has to decide for itself what its role in education should be, and then design its programs accordingly. The states will cheerfully take the money and bitterly complain about strings attached. But an accommodation can thus be reached in which at least some of the federal goals will be partially attained.

SH: Some conflict is inevitable. Most decisions will be less than totally rational, as defined by the people in this room. But what we're talking about is devising forums to decide the areas in which the feds will operate and those that are out of bounds. Right now, there aren't adequate countervailing forces to the very effective way in which individual lobbies or individual interests of individual Congressmen work. Therefore, it's relatively easy to create a program for metric education and to get a couple of million dollars or to create a program for the gifted and talented for two or three million dollars. There is no prestigious and commanding authority in the states to say "Hey, wait a minute! That's not where the money ought to go. If you want to spend federal money, put it here or put it there." I guess what I'm looking for is something like a sounding board that is broader and more authoritative than just the chief state school officers, school boards, and teachers' organizations, some grouping that can say to the feds "yes" or "no". That doesn't mean that the feds will always follow their recommendations, because there are political imperatives and independent judgements that operate on all Congressmen.

I'm not saying that what happens now is not in the public interest, but rather that it is extraordinarily messy. I would prefer to try to get the dialogue up to a political level in the states and on a state-Washington basis. That's better than accepting what each individual interest group can get for itself in the way of a hunting license. I don't seek and don't expect "total rationality". It is a better political "deal" that I'm looking for.

Regulating the Regulators

MT: Let me raise another concern: not so much the money that flows through federal program structure, but the development in federal education policy of a myriad of regulations and reports - - whole buckets of molasses being poured on the process. What kind of solvent do we have for our new President to cut some of the gook? I ask this with some trepidation because every one of these requirements is really required - - I endorse each and every objective - - whether it is occupational safety and health, affirmative action, Title IX, privacy, freedom of information, fiduciary responsibility, or several others I can think of. And, of course, many of these regulations flow from judicial decisions.

SH: If we have fewer programs, there is the hope of less regulation. But more than and prior to that, we need a new kind of dialogue among levels of government which doesn't now exist. I don't think the feds, whether in the Congress or in the Executive Branch, have this sense of the differences among states that Bob earlier alluded to. Nor do they really know how costly federal regulations are to administer. No good mechanism exists for finding out what will happen out there as a result of federal regulations and guidelines. We must therefore strengthen those mechanisms that, in effect, report to and sound off to the feds. That is a necessary but not a total solution.

MT: The federal regulatory structure in education feeds on itself. With all due respect to the gentlemen and ladies concerned, it's the same lawyers and the same officers in HEW who are telling the bureaus how to write regulations. And Congress has rarely intervened in that process. Congress has the right to say "no, Mr. or Ms. Bureaucrat, you don't need all those regulations to carry out our intent," but they don't.

RA: Congress did put into law a mechanism for rejecting regulations, but it would be very difficult politically. As a matter of fact, despite the complaining about regulations that Congressmen engage in, whenever we run into a politically difficult detail that cannot be resolved through consensus, the issue is left for the regulation writers. The toughest kinds of questions for regulation writers then tend to be where the legislative intent is mixed, if articulated at all.

On this matter of regulations, Tom and I were observing that if you cut the number of federal programs in half, the amount of regulations would be reduced by maybe ten percent. A number of the most troublesome and costly regulations apply to educational institutions, whether they participate in one, ten or 20 programs. It gets down, perhaps, to the question of the extent to which federal decisionmakers are willing to trust the good judgment of local and state officials and the extent to which federal politicians can live with different standards, different approaches to meeting a federal priority.

CF: Most of these regulations have emerged in areas where the educational community's record is not spotless. Whether one thinks of hiring minority people or policing the abuse of guaranteed loans by the proprietary schools, there is an awful dearth of spontaneous compliance with reasonable social objectives. Whole new interest groups have arisen to compel the federal government to force education to do what one might think it should always have been doing. These lobbies have gotten quite powerful and are as much to be reckoned with by federal policymakers as the "we want money" lobbies that would happily dispense with all the regulations. Indeed, it's cheaper to satisfy a pro-regulation lobby than a pro-money lobby. All you have to do is write a requirement, not pass an appropriation.

TW: You also come up against the constitutional requirement for equal protection and try to square that with the diversity of the states. You might allow the states a certain amount of flexibility, but on the other hand you cannot allow a given state to deviate from some federal right that has been discovered, enunciated, or was always implicit in the Constitution. If you do, the courts will catch you before long.

RA: We could write more laws and more regulations that assume good faith - - assume innocence rather than guilt. Or write regulations that try to get at the three or four or five percent of the institutions causing the problem without, in the beginning at least, imposing regulations on all 100 percent.

TW: That requires confidence in the Executive Branch on the part of the Congress, not only confidence in the states and institutions. You have to have confidence in the Office of Education to identify those who need to be disciplined, and to do it effectively. There is an inherent tension between the branches, particularly when we have a division of control. Do you trust the bureaucrats to use that discretion wisely and effectively? Generally the answer from Congress is "no".

SH: I get out of this discussion, particularly from Bob's point about trust, the absolute necessity for trying to draw federal legislation in terms of broad social objectives, rather than in narrow, prescriptive and measurable terms. This would allow the maximum of state and local discretion on how to reach those objectives developed by the Congress, hopefully in concert with the states. I've always liked (not only because of my personal involvement with it, but because it's just good public policy) something like Title I of ESEA which, in effect, says educators have to serve the disadvantaged child. But how they do it is up to the state and school districts to determine. The U.S. Commissioner establishes reasonable measures of size, scope and quality to achieve that overall objective, but the guts of program design and implementation have to occur outside Washington.

A second thing that comes out of this insistence on trust, Bob, is that we have confidence in policymaking mechanisms at the state level. We talked about ECS, about state departments of education needing strengthening, governors and legislatures needing strengthening, the 1202 commissions in higher education needing strengthening. These latest devices, incidentally, were innovations by the Congress, which was trying to put a level of government between itself and thousands of individual institutions. In general, I think it was a good thing, although we're going to need a lot more experience before we have a final verdict on that.

One other thing I think is needed while we're all talking about exercising moderation and restraint at the federal level. In a kind of a paradoxical way, I think, the Office of Education of HEW has to be strengthened to make federalism work better. OE is not only called upon to do too much with too small a staff, but it is given regulatory and prescriptive jobs to do that it can never do and ought not do. If the Congress wants the Office of Education to carry out regulations, it must provide staff. If it wants the Office of Education to carry out studies, again, staff. That hasn't been the case. The Congress has been increasing the size and scope of the Office of Education's fiscal responsibilities much, much faster than any commensurate institution-building that it has been willing to support. It's paradoxical, perhaps, but I think that the federal system requires an effective and well-managed Office of Education just as much as it requires strong state departments and strong political institutions in the field of education.

RA: But here again, you can't measure strength, so you measure staff. If what you're talking about is adding more staff and assuming that resolves the problem, then I wonder . . .

SH: It doesn't by itself, Bob; we know that. But there's no question that the addition of highly qualified staff to the Congress in the last 15 years has really made a qualitative difference in the effectiveness of your congressional committees.

RA: I hope so, but it has also made a quantitative difference in the number of laws, requirements, amendments, and so forth. Typically, amendments are drafted by some staff person who has been accessible to some interest group and was willing and had the time available to do the job. Even when not too well understood, the legislation gets accepted by Congress even though a very small number of people had been involved. I wonder if it's too far out to suggest another idea - - that programs reimburse educational institutions for the cost of complying with their regulations.

MT: If such a provision came out of existing appropriations, it would put the recipients on the side of minimizing regulation.

It quantifies this problem which, now, an appropriations committee can't begin to appreciate. Nor can an authorizing committee, because each subcommittee - - which is what you really have to look at - - and each program office says "my goodness, what we're requiring of institutions is not burdensome at all. Look, it's only this." But it's the cumulative impact of regulations for each of these small programs that really hurts the educational institutions.

CF: I think Bob has a splendid idea. The principal beneficiaries would be the accountants and auditors of the nation. Gauging these costs is fiercely difficult.

SH: In other words, it would ease the pain, but not the regulatory burden, Bob. As one Congressman said, they used to call federal money "tainted money" and now they say "tain't enough". The real meaning is that there isn't enough money to cover the pains of accommodation. You would ease the pains of accommodation, but you wouldn't simplify the problem very much.

MT: Is there a way to discourage the regulation-writers?

SH: Well, maybe there should be an adversary office within the Executive

Office of the President that takes as its sole responsibility the simplification of regulations and the voiding of unneccessary regulations.

CF: Well, we've got the Federal Paper Work Commission, and the Office of Management and Budget tries to control the issuance of regulations.

RA: HEW just developed such an office under Secretary Matthews.

MT: Any bureaucrat in his right mind is trying to strengthen those processes and has almost ever since I've been associated with bureaucracies. Something newer or stronger or more radical needs to be imagined. I don't know what it is.

RA: Isn't the political climate right, though? Can you remember when educators complained as they do now - - visibly, publicly - - about federal regulations and intervention? Now, the question is whether someone should encourage that or make them feel like they're too reactionary or whatever.

CF: The fastest way out of regulation is to head back toward revenue-sharing. Get out of the categorical programs. Turn the money over to someone else and let them do with it as they like. We can cut down enormously on the amount of federal intrusiveness by simply whittling down the definition of federal role. That doesn't mean we have to reduce the amount of federal money.

SH: That's what I would have thought, except that Bob says that cutting the number of programs in half would only get rid of ten percent of the regulations. I don't know where you got that number, Bob.

RA: Checker gave it to me just a while ago! It may be off, but it makes the point. The volume of regulations for hundreds of small categorical programs is great. I think the ones that are causing the most trouble generally fall in the areas of affirmative action, health and safety, and employment. You could cut out 16 categorical programs that send money to universities, and they would still have all the regulations dealing with employment, student rights, consumer protection, occupational safety and health.

Getting the Facts to Policymakers

MT: Let me raise a question. Given an age of maturity, cooperation and trust, less regulation and a sorting of the functions of governments (which we've already decided would all be good things), where will the quality control be? Make the question two parts. How will we generate information on the effectiveness of these programs - - whatever level of government is running them? And how can we get such information used? To put it in bold form, how can we keep politicians and legislatures from ignoring the information which exists, let alone get them to use new kinds of information which we have yet to generate? If we don't talk about who decides priorities and who decides what works, we're just dealing in boxes and partitions and forms.

TW: I don't think policymakers ever make decisions that boldly fly in the face of the facts. However, there are so few areas of policymaking in which the facts are clear. Yes, you find that policymakers are influenced by the available information, and the quality and content of the debate, but there are usually articulate spokesmen and computer printouts on all sides of every issue. It is a will-o'-the-wisp to say, "Why don't they decide according to the facts?" When they do, they just choose different sets of facts on each of the issues. The fundamental problem is that policymakers often disagree on the questions or values involved in a policy area. One may be interested in "targeting" benefits on the most disadvantaged, while another wants to spread benefits broadly to relieve the "burden on middle income taxpayers". Without stipulating the policy objective, which rarely occurs, it is impossible to make objective decisions based on the facts.

RA: One way to do that relates to one of your earlier ideas - - cut the number of programs. No matter how big government gets, we have the same number of Congressmen and we still have one President. And when we have, as we do in our one committee, 114 programs terminating during one Congress, you can't expect even the programs that are terminating to get ample time for discussion and a look at the facts. So one is tempted to go on what he already believes and simply try to find the

facts or sort out the facts that would reinforce that view. Now, if you had only a few programs terminating and a few programs to consider, more attention could be given to such areas as graduate education. It's next to impossible to get a Congressman to sit down and think of graduate education now.

TW: What typically happens is that we have a whole raft of programs expiring simultaneously. The attention of policymakers and their staffs tends to focus on the few squeaky wheels, the problem areas, or controversial programs. or the big buck items such as the Basic Education Opportunity Grant program. And all of the programs that could use substantive oversight, like graduate education, are just tagged on without much change and swept along as the omnibus bill goes through the process with everybody's attention focused in a few places.

CF: If there were only five federal education programs and they were each authorized for five years, with one expiring every year, it would be possible to get a greater concentration on the merits, accomplishments and problems of that one program. But we must reckon with our fearful lack of confidence in the so-called facts. Whereas we are pretty good at knowing how many bombers we've got and even knowing how many people have incomes below a certain level, we're not very good at knowing how many disadvantaged youngsters are not receiving the education which they should be getting. It is a very serious problem. If I were a Congressman, one of the reasons I would reject factual presentations is because I could turn around and someone would bring me in a different set of facts and a whole different interpretation.

MT: There are some incontrovertible facts, Checker. For example, fewer children were born in 1975 - - a fact that will have some meaning through 1995 in the education establishment.

TW: The Congressmen want to know what is the magnitude of the "unmet need". Are there people out there who could and should be the beneficiaries of federal programs?

SH: It may be an idle dream, Tom, but if we had better consensus on the earlier question we were discussing, notably that of the appropriate federal role, maybe that Congressman wouldn't always be asking about the magnitude of the unmet need. It might well have been established earlier, in a dialogue that doesn't now take place, that it is not always an appropriate question to raise at the federal level. What one should worry about at the federal level are questions like: Is this a problem so

overridingly national in character that the federal government must address it? Are there alternative sources of funding and alternative ways to meet the problem? Is there leadership in place in the states to carry out the job? Do we have an effective research and development establishment that will answer critical questions about what works and what doesn't? Do we have an effective dissemination system and accurate knowledge of how diffusion and implementation take place? Can we transmit knowledge to the field and build in a set of incentives to help people adopt them? Those seem to me to be appropriate federal concerns. However, not every unmet need ought to be addressed as an appropriate federal concern with a federal program launched to do something about it.

TW: Sam, the areas that you just mentioned all involve relatively small numbers of people leadership and research and development. Congress could conceivably go in that direction and focus on those kinds of concerns. On the other hand, the upshot of that might be Congressmen placing even less of a priority on education than they do now because it would serve such a small and select number of constituents. If we view the federal role in education as a series of well-targeted rifle shots aimed at areas where there is a unique federal competence, then we are accepting a low priority for it in Congress and we would be promoting federal education programs that lack a mass base.

SH: We ought to make it clear, as we did earlier in our conversation, that we're not advocating reducing federal dollars for education; at least I am not. On the contrary, to really get better educational results, we're going to have to increase the number of dollars expended. Congress would have a larger but more focussed concern with several broad policy areas, whether equal educational opportunity or education of the handicapped, or some other areas. I assume that the Congress would continue to give oversight and substantial fiscal help to several major areas of federal responsibility.

TW: So you're talking about new and future Congressional focus.

SH: More focus, precisely.

Congressional oversight is, in part, oversight of Congress. The most influential Congressmen and their staffs have long tenures. Both have long memories, and they are overseeing programs put together with a large investment of their own political activity. They are not going

to be willing to give up their own baby.

But in a democracy, the only answer to that very natural tendency is to create countervailing power, competing interests, checks and balances. The countervailing force ought to be to strengthen state leadership and state decisionmaking processes and to create various forums for improved intergovernmental communication.

There is something else that needs strengthening: the Executive Branch and HEW in particular. We've had a situation for most of the last eight years in which the Congress, regardless of political party, has not taken the Executive Branch and its administrative and analytical capabilities very seriously. Trust has to be restored so that the Congress can believe the Executive Branch is both competent and relatively honest. The White House has to be thought of as a leadership which is not just trying to cut programs and save dollars. Until there is acceptance on the part of Congress that HEW and the Office of Education really care about effectively implementing their laws and about improving them through experience, I think the Congress will continue, as it does now, to ignore the proper role and contributions of the Executive Branch.

TW: You cannot ignore the realities of partisanship. You cannot expect HEW in a Republican Administration to honestly tell the Democratic congressional majority which programs are in trouble and where all their priorities are. There are some basic and important differences between the parties that impede cooperation and more rational decision-making when one controls Congress and the other the Executive Branch.

SH: Yes, but they will also disagree when the same political party controls both branches - - they always have, to a greater or less extent.

TW: Absolutely, but partisanship exacerbates that inherent tension between the branches. For example, I don't think Bob feels the kind of reticence that I might feel in trying to deal with the Executive Branch. There is probably more confidence and openness between them.

RA: Well, I think that when you are in the minority in the Congress, your objective is to win a point of view. You need a majority of the total membership, which means that you can't become partisan. Whereas the Executive Branch can afford to have a position, which would now be tagged as a Republican proposal, the minority party on the Hill is in the position, regardless of how valid the proposal, of not being able

to push it as our Republican position. The more partisan the proposal, the more difficult it is to sell. My own strategy has been to help get out of HEW some of the data collection and analysis that HEW is now doing in hopes that a more politically neutral community of policy analysts might come to Congress directly with some of these good ideas. I think that in both branches there are some inhibitions to very open and objective policy analysis. Not to say that nongovernment policy analysts are free of those biases, too.

CF: My notion is that what we need in Washington is a new creature - - a National Academy of Education, an analogue to the National Academy of Science, an objective, quasigovernmental body which is neither an interest group nor a partisan captive of one branch of government or the other. What I envision is a chartered organization which does studies and program evaluations and is renowned for its detachment, its dispassion, its high quality research and its general credibility. The absence of such a mediating source of information and analysis is a serious problem.

RA: If we were to create such an agency, I suspect that most of us in this room would know who would be hired to be on its staff. Are you suggesting that, with better funding, this talent that is now out there can all of a sudden produce a much higher level of quality?

CF: The kind of policy analysis that is now farmed out to non-government agencies goes nine times out of ten to an organization which has a self-interest in the policy outcome. We need a locus for such work which is not self-interested.

RA: It might be worth a try. The current arrangement is often disappointing. I think that we have to recognize, though, that value judgments are going to be far more persuasive in both branches and in all levels of education than is policy analysis. A different approach is good dialogue. It takes more time - - it's more frustrating and so forth - - but it probably is going to be as persuasive as any amount of research that we could think about.

I'm wondering whether or not we, and colleagues like us, lose touch with the real nature of education in that we are fortunate to have an exposure, and people to finance us, to look broadly at the system - - to become educated about it and so forth. Do we not set expectations that, when you visit the average school in the average school district with the average teacher meeting with the average student, are just far

beyond what is realistic? Isn't the gap between what happens in an individual child's life with his teacher and what we talk about in Washington a source of frustration?

RA: It might be. This is very radical, but it might be that the greatest kind of help would be to allow each Congressman and each high Executive Branch official to have a week as a teacher in an inner city school some place.

ALL: Yeah, that is a radical suggestion!

This concludes the May segment of the Colloquium. The discussion that follows occurred on June 3, 1976.

Organizing the Federal Effort: Creating New Forms

SH: When we last met, we talked about the way the federal role in education has mushroomed over the years and how well that federal role was working. We seemed to agree, despite our various backgrounds and political affiliations, that the federal role in education was somewhere between poorly conceived and disastrously implemented. We all had a number of recommendations to a hypothetical President-elect for improving that federal role.

Let's examine today how the federal interest in education should be organized. What about the bureaucratic structure for carrying out federal commitments?

Although, as we all know, the federal interest in education has been expressed primarily through the 109-year-old U.S. Office of Education, over 40 federal agencies and organizations of various kinds and sizes administer or fund education programs. Indeed, it is hard to know just how many education programs there are within the $12 billion classified as education in the federal budget. Nor are we likely to know without a rational ordering of these activities. From time to time, political candidates and legislators and the education associations have suggested the creation of a federal Department of Education, usually combined with something else - - arts, humanities, science, manpower. Or, at the minimum, they suggest that the bulk of the programs centered in the Office of Education be upgraded and given more stature by incorporation into a federal Department of Education. What are your views on that?

MT: When I worked at HEW, I opposed the idea of a Department of Education, but I don't any more. In HEW, our rationale, like the one commonly espoused in the Office of Management and Budget of the White House, was that one makes broad and rational trade-offs across programs related to similar target groups. The idea in creating HEW was to set up a great Department which could deal with the social needs of various disadvantaged and at-need groups in society. The most intelligent way to make intelligent decisions was presumably to consider the range of their needs - - health, income, social support, and education - -

and to make the most sensible trade-offs among the policies that government might launch to help them. As I think back, that didn't often happen. And if it does happen now, it doesn't happen in a way that requires the presence of education in HEW. It happens pretty much as a matter of political priorities or values, not as a result of explicit analytical trade-offs which are made in the Executive Branch or in the Congress or anywhere else that I know of.

Education programs, like those in science and training, are scattered among government agencies and need a more coordinated management. It might make some sense to reorganize in a way that pulls generally similar programs under one roof. For example, matters like education and science and training, which are often carried on in the same institutions, may represent a more logical grouping for cabinet department status than the combinations we have now. Moreover, education requires a more effective voice in federal policymaking. The Commissioner of Education who gets to talk real policy with the President of the United States a few times every decade could be replaced by a more prestigious cabinet officer. Education would be more effectively represented and might indeed make out a little better in budget allocations if there were a Department of Education. On balance, while a Department of Education would create some problems, just as HEW created some problems, I would be for it.

RA: Are you saying that the two major concerns are: (1) greater recognition of and visibility for education at the federal level; and (2) the possibility of greater funding for education as a separate Department than as part of HEW?

MT: Those are surely two legitimate political objectives. They are not the only nor are they sufficient objectives for a Department of Education.

TW: The push for a Department of Education is largely political in the sense that education is now a major industry employing millions of people and spending billions of dollars. Just as farmers sought recognition by the creation of the Department of Agriculture and labor by the Department of Labor, I think that education has now become a major sector of the economy and the society. It is demanding its place in the bureaucratic sun in Washington.

One has to think beyond this to the implications of a Department of Education for the federal role in education. The federal government

has tended to treat education as a means rather than as an end. You have education programs in every federal department. A Department of Education also has implications for the federal role in terms of federal-state relations. If the federal government takes a coherent overview of education that suggests that the federal responsibility is equal to or greater than the state responsibility, that would be a pragmatic modification of the Constitution in the sense that education has been thought of as a primary state and local responsibility. Reorganization might bring some coherence to federal policymaking, an ability to systematically integrate all the pieces that are scattered across the federal landscape. But there would be serious practical problems in doing it. Mike's comments indicate what some of those practical problems are. He mentioned four areas: education, science, training and cultural affairs. Exactly where do you draw the line? Also, to integrate all those into a single federal bureaucratic entity is to upgrade education but to downgrade a lot of others. The national Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities or the National Science Foundation would no longer be independent agenices but would be put under somebody else's umbrella.

CF: There's a version of an Education Department I could be enthusiastic about and another version I don't like. Regrettably, the one I like -- and the one we've been discussing -- is the less likely to come about. I think of it as a super-Department of Education, embracing such things as manpower, training, science, arts, humanities, culture, putting in one place a great many activities that have some sensible relationship to each other. That I would find a very attractive kind of agency if only because a lot of things I'm interested in would then be located in one place. But for reasons that Tom and Mike have suggested, what's more likely to happen is simply that what's now called the Education Division of HEW will get elevated to cabinet status. That's the conventional idea in the minds of most people who talk about a Department of Education. I think it's a bad idea. For one thing, being a cabinet department is ever less important in the American Government. Most of the agencies that have been created in the last 20 years have not been cabinet departments, but they've been new and independent just the same. Cabinet status has a traditional cachet, but in reality it confers nothing that the Federal Energy Agency or the National Science Foundation do not have in their own right, even though neither has a seat at the cabinet table.

Whether there should be an independent education agency, cabinet level or not, is also to ask whether the President should have to contend with yet another independent agency. I tend to think that, if it is only the Education Division writ large, he shouldn't have to. I see that as pandering to the interests of the nation's organized school teachers. It's true, the farmers have their agency and organized labor has its, but I don't see why the school teachers should have theirs, or why the President should have to slam the door when he doesn't want to see the former school teacher who becomes the head of that agency. I would just add that, as far as higher education is concerned, the conventional approach to a Department of Education makes very little sense. The higher education functions presently lodged in the Education Division wouldn't get carried out any better if the Division were given separate agency status. For the most part, they are check-writing functions. Most of the discretionary spending programs are already located elsewhere and are likely to stay there.

SH: A number of things have been said that deserve further probing. I think we all agreed that if a Department comes about it might well be because of the political clout of the organized teaching profession and the desire for greater prestige on the part of these organizations that represent teachers. After that, there's less agreement about what happens to education once a Department is created. We are all aware of the situation that Checker alluded to of secretaries of departments not being able to see the President or of their not being able materially to improve their budgets. Does anyone know, for example, if there's any research that indicates whether transportation has fared better since it became a Department than when it was a series of unrelated and separate agencies?

Another question that interests me relates to our previous discussion: does it necessarily follow, if we are to have a Department of Education - - either "mini," as described by Checker, or "maxi," which includes science and cultural programs - - that a Department of Education means more federal regulation, more federal control, a bigger federal role in the life of the nation? If it means that, I would be concerned. While I favor a substantially increased federal financial role, I'm concerned about the present disarray of programs and the spread of issues the federal government is dealing with. Simply to upgrade that situation and encapsulate it in a more prestigious Department might be a hunting license for more harassing involvement in the educational life

of the nation. To put it differently, is it possible to create a federal Department of Education and, at the same time, to limit and rationalize the federal government's impact? Can you create a Department in order to determine more carefully what the federal government will and will not do?

TW: There are two possibilities. First, and most likely, a new Secretary of Education would be the most prestigious and visible educational figure in America and, if he or she has any ambition, the Secretary will be making pronouncements and policy recommendations to cover the whole gamut of educational issues. Thus there will be more federal intervention. A less likely possibility is that a single Department of Education which would bring together in one place all the federal government's education programs just might rationalize and curtail the uncoordinated interventions and intrusions on institutions and states that characterize the present system.

RA: It may be a false assumption to think that pulling programs together in one Department will increase coordination. You have to remember that it's a congressional sub-committee or committee someplace on the Hill that's creating these programs. It doesn't necessarily follow that putting them all together in one executive agency will result in a clearer rationale of the federal role and better coordination in the Legislative Branch. We know that subcommittees within one committee do a poor job of coordinating vocational education, for example, with higher education. And in the Executive Branch, looking at the Office of Education for an example, it is becoming increasingly evident that coordination between the Guaranteed Student Loan program in one division and the other student aid programs in another division is not necessarily better than if the two programs were in different agencies. So to make the Office of Education a cabinet Department would not automatically solve problems that already exist in one sub-unit of a cabinet Department.

Policy Implications of a Separate Department of Education

MT: Isn't it time we had a national educational policy? We've made two contrary points in the course of the dialogue. One is that the federal government has no educational policy and the other is that it has hundreds of educational policies, totally uncoordinated. And we believe both of those statements. Is it time for someone to create a national education policy? Not a policy that implies federal control of everything, but one that means the federal government is facing up to what it does and does not do in education and making some ground rules for itself. Wouldn't that create some understanding of whether the federal government is and is not in this business to stay? It may be just the time for federal officials to try this instead of continually apologizing for being in educational policy at all.

CF: The principle of coordination carries within it the idea of a consolidated policy, and I think we have to recognize that, historically, that goal has evoked great ambivalence from educators. The "all your eggs in one basket" risk has been cited time and again, at least for the past two decades. University presidents have preferred to live amid confusion than to live with a single agency, a single subcommittee and a single budget item controlling so much of their livelihood. I think we have to ask whether we're ready now to take that risk.

We might also speculate on ways in which a new agency could be structured so as to mediate some of the more obvious hazards. Consider, for example, the model of the National Science Foundation, with the National Science Board setting agency policy. I realize people will object to something that smacks of a national board of education and yet I'm not sure that's a bad idea, particularly if the alternative is to have only elected politicians sitting atop the new Department of Education. It may well be that the kind of three-way dialogue that results in NSF between the science board, the Executive Branch and the Congress would be a useful triumvirate for education as well.

TW: I would strongly object to any policy body that is not subject to political control. It is a fundamental principal of democratic representative government that elected officials run the show. They are held

accountable and responsible. One way to increase their accountability is not to give them the out of being able to say "I don't control these people, and they made the policy". I'd like to see all the regulatory agencies turn over with every President. The idea behind those agencies was that you had neutral, technical experts who could take a long and rational view of policy. It's turned out that what you get is political appointees with very clear preferences who hold over to the next administration and sabotage its new policy goals which are based on the preferences of the electorate.

SH: Looking beyond the merits of Checker's suggestion for a moment, the politics seem very difficult. To create a Department of Education would probably require strong support from the organized groups. For them to go along with a truly independent board of education or national academy of education above the Department or between the Department and the Congress would mean that they would think that they could control it. And that would seem to be reducing the very merits you would like to see. Perhaps it happened in the case of science in a particular moment in history. I don't see it as being likely on today's political terrain.

CF: I'm not sure it would be any better if we simply had an agency head who had to be cleared by all the same education organizations before he could be appointed, and who, in effect, would lose his job as soon as he became intolerable to them. I think that if we're contemplating new agencies, it's reasonable to dream up new models for them. For example, what if you had a 50-member education board with its members appointed by the fifty governors? That would at least respect the primacy of the state role in education. I'm not sure that it's a good idea, but it's a different approach.

RA: We already have the Education Commission of the States which does attempt to bring the states together, both the political and the education leadership. Rather than capturing it and making this effort a federal initiative, I would rather see the federal government enter into more of a partnership attitude with some of the existing local and state agencies. Mike has characterized education issues in the next few years as falling into one or two categories, either boring or depressing. Could that be part of the reason why it's the educators who now want to feel as though they have a higher place on the totem pole? A cabinet-level Department of Education could happen because there are some education groups for it and no organized interests against it. So, if a President

wanted to win support and favor with a few million people, he might go along. It seems to me that, if the results are uncertain, in a time when the issues are more mundane, when government is generally either bored or depressed by education issues, then it is not the time to try to stir up everyone by moving programs around into new agencies and creating new alignments. That would confuse the picture when what we need is clarity.

I wonder if there are alternatives to creating a new Department which could meet some of the needs. For example, could a President appoint an education advisor to the President similar to a science advisor, one who would be open to discussions of this sort and who would be a catalyst for the various agencies now involved in education? Could the President himself call some kind of summit conference to deal with the relative roles of different levels of government in education? Could we create on the Hill a separate budget function in the new budgetary process for education? Could we formalize the separate education appropriations bills in which we have tried in the last few years to take away some of the competition from the non-discretionary programs? It seems to me that it boils down to the quality of people involved in the top positions and whether or not the President wants to make education a visible area of concern and how that is reflected down through the Executive Branch. Another question is whether the leadership of Congress is willing to give it a higher priority in the Legislative Branch.

Pressures and Expectations

SH: This is a good illustration of Miles' law. Rufus Miles, formerly an Assistant Secretary for Administration at HEW, used to say that where you stand depends upon where you sit. The pressures for a Department of Education come mostly from organized educational groups who feel that such a Department, either mini or maxi, would give them two things: more prestige and more funds. I think it's characteristic of the five people sitting in this room that we have somewhat less concern than most educational interests for more prestige for education and, possibly, that's also true regarding our concern for money. Most of our discussion has been relating to making the federal role more effective, more bang for the federal buck, trying to determine what is efficient delivery of service and what is not. Those questions, my friends, are really not very high on the priority list of many who are pushing for a Department of Education.

MT: Let me demur from your view a bit, Sam. Let me say that, over the long pull, what is so outrageous about the motivations you describe for a Department of Education? Are they any different from the motivations which have led to the establishment of almost every other Department in the federal government -- especially in domestic policy? And does not education merit cabinet status as a national activity? What's wrong with one of the most important activities that our nation carries on saying to its national legislature and national executive that it wants to be recognized prominently as a concern for this national government more so than it is now? What's wrong with that?

RA: Nothing is wrong, unless the expectations that go with that kind of a push couldn't be fulfilled.

MT: Well, whose expectations *are* fulfilled by a cabinet Department? Are the highway builders or the mass transit fans totally satisfied with the Department of Transportation? Are the labor unions totally satisfied with what the Department of Labor is able to do for them or businessmen with the Department of Commerce? I believe there are some legitimate expectations that can be met, involving better managed programs and adequate funding of existing legislative obligations that a

Department of Education could help achieve. They seem to me to be legitimate, long-run political objectives - - not necessarily implying any large-scale overturn of the existing political order in the content of education among our levels of government.

CF: All that you say is true, but I still don't think I would advise a President, unless he were politically beholden to this particular group of voters, to reward them with a Department of Education simply because they aspired to one. Of course, the President might also believe that national interests of a less selfish sort would be advanced by the creation of such a Department. But I'm not persuaded that that's so. One perverse benefit might befall the President in that a separate agency would escalate the rivalries within the education community as its elements vie for pieces of a single agency budget mark. Now they tend to line up together in opposition to other federal activities that are competing for their collective funds, specifically within HEW. If there were a separate Department, I think you would see spectacular battles among the elementary, secondary and higher education interests. And I think the President might be delighted to farm those decisions out to a luckless agency head.

RA: Isn't it true that in recent years many of the real concerns education institutions have are not limited to program agencies? Aren't many of the problems related to actions by the Office of Civil Rights, EEOC, Occupational Safety and Health administrators, Veterans Administration, IRS, and similar agencies? There is no way even in your "maxi department" that these major, all-encompassing functions are going to be included in a Department of Education.

SH: That point brings home the fact that life is not likely to get simpler for anyone, regardless of the creation of the Department of Education. But, there still is the hope that Presidential support for the elevation of education's status in the federal government will bring not only more dollars and more prestige but, at least on the part of some, greater rationality in dealing with regulations, with multiple funding agencies, and the like.

The New Department as a Fresh Start

SH: Could we focus a bit more on what steps might be taken to insure that, if there is a Department, it is going to be more than window dressing and more than a great shuffling of desks and charts and bodies? What are some of the things you would like to see happen in such a Department to insure elevation of program quality, as well as bureaucratic reorganization?

TW: The most effective Secretary of Education would be the one given the capability to do the most, that is, given the most discretion. That runs squarely up against the Congressional propensity to elevate, isolate and protect particular programs by limiting the discretion that the administrative hierarchy can exercise over them. The congressional committees have grown very skilled in setting up little independent duchies for their favorite programs.

CF: It would be awful if the new Department started without a new set of policies. We've had some miserable experience with new agencies which inherited the programs, the clienteles and the personnel of their predecessors and found themselves with all of the old problems rewritten but unchanged. I am mindful of the National Institute of Education's brief history. It was intended to do within the sphere of educational research much of what we are now talking about for education as a whole, but it acquired the Office of Education's programs, legislation, policies, regulations, interest groups, and people and, consequently, it was shackled and hamstrung from the outset.

TW: Another relevant concern is that a new Department of Education implies trading the promise of future benefits against some short-run disadvantages. The Office of Education has been reorganized many times since the influx of programs in the sixties. The Office of Education has been playing catch-up for a long time because of its ever-increasing workload and the turmoil of frequent reorganizations. It is painfully, shamefully slow in promulgating regulations and in responding to changing circumstances. And we're talking about engaging in a massive shuffle of agencies and personnel. There would be some serious short-term losses of efficiency and effectiveness.

MT: But there could also be some great "bureaucratic" gains. I can give you two examples. First, some of the ineffectiveness in the Office of Education should be marked up to the legal style of the General Counsel's Office in HEW, which has been for decades a nay-saying outfit. There are two kinds of lawyers: the kind that tell you why you can't do anything and the kind who tell you how you can legally do what you want to do. HEW has the former.

CF: But the second group doesn't go to work for the government.

MT: The second group doesn't really work for the government; the second group works for the Department of Defense, let me tell you. Go over to the Pentagon and you'll be struck by nothing more than the difference between the attitudes of the General Counsel's offices of those two Departments; that's exactly where I picked up the contrast. A Department of Education that solved that problem would cure one of OE's afflictions.

RA: Let me just agree with your first one. Chalk up one point for a Department of Education - - if it changes lawyers.

MT: Note parenthetically that Joe Califano, one of Lyndon Johnson's great movers and shakers, came out of the Office of Counsel at the Department of Defense.

My second point relates to budget appeals. A Commissioner of Education has so much credit to spend with his friendly Secretary of HEW. He wants to appeal a budget item and he has his minions telling him that there are ten things he should appeal. The likelihood is he'll only appeal three. The Secretary of HEW, in turn, will only want to appeal one of those to OMB and probably none of them to the President. A Department of Education moves that entire process up one notch.

RA: Mike, you're assuming that the President's budget is going to have more influence than it has had the last few years in the area of education. Internally, I would agree that's a useful thing. Let's assume, however, that the public continues to be concerned about the quality of education - - getting the basics taught in the schools. It seems to me that, no matter how much we do as policymakers and policy analysts, we eventually realize our dependence on the quality and the commitment and the drive of the individual classroom teacher. Somehow or another, we have to focus on improving the quality of what happens in the classrooms. I would predict that a separate Department of Education

would soon become the voice of administrators, those who have expense accounts and can travel to Washington to participate in agency discussions, and that teachers, although they now support a Department of Education, would be step-children after a very few years.

MT: My god, Bob! You're a syndicalist!

RA: Just a populist.

MT: I agree. I would turn the point and say that it may be that the only route to the rejuvenation of spirit and performance of the classroom teacher may be through the teachers' organizations.

SH: That may well be but, in any case, I don't think this a particularly appropriate question for the federal government to deal with. I don't think the "how to" of the rejuvenation of the classroom teacher is truly an issue for the federal government. The federal government can fund education better or poorer. It can fund research about teaching and about learning and about the environment in which good teaching can take place. But, by and large, the issue of exactly how to get good teaching has to be addressed at other levels of government.

MT: Why can't the federal government pass a public employees' collective bargaining law which provides an orderly and reasonable way for the unions and management to get by this excruciating but inevitable process of organizing the education profession in America, so that the teachers and their organizations may, as I hope they want to, get on to some other issues that are important to American education?

SH: That has to be addressed as an issue in its own right, Mike, irrespective of how one deals with the question of the organization of the federal programs and instrumentalities in education.

RA: Sam, I raised a question in terms of what a President could do to focus attention on where it most needs focusing. If he wanted to focus attention on governmental reorganization and say that that is going to improve how Johnny learns to read or whatever, I am suggesting that it may be the wrong strategy; there might be better strategies a President could adopt to focus attention back down at the local level and on the school teachers themselves.

CF: That's an important point, far more important than the strengthening of the national teachers' associations that I think would be the most prominent effect of creating a new department or agency. I see no

reason why a Secretary of Education has to take hat in hand and go up to Sixteenth Street (to the NEA, ed.) in the same manner that the Secretary of Labor now does (to the AFL-CIO) in order to get sanction for the kinds of policies he thinks might be in the best interest of the nation's school children. And I'd much rather see a President direct his attention to the school children than to the well-being of the organizations which purport to represent those who teach the children.

RA: Right now, good people are discouraged, I think, at the local level from staying in teaching, in school administration, or running for school boards because the impression is that too much is coming down from the federal level, tying their hands, and not giving them enough freedom to be as creative and independent as they might like to be. I think a President could create an environment in which good people at the local level could again get interested in the school.

SH: I think that's the worst kind of over-promising. I don't really believe that the federal government can do very much about the condition you cite, Bob, or that the President of the United States can do very much, other than try to highlight the *importance* of good teaching - - to give it honor and respect and back that up by putting more bucks into selected teacher improvement programs. That I can understand. But the strings that are to be put upon teacher performance are, by and large, a state and local responsibility.

From our previous discussion, it's clear that we're all interested in and committed to finding ways to get away from the negative consequences of certain existing federal policies. That can be done irrespective of what is done about a Department of Education, and it should be addressed. But we must recognize that some people worry that, if a Department of Education is created, it will make it even less likely that a President of the United States will be able to control that Department and to deal with the deleterious impacts of many federal programs because those programs carry with them lots of dollars that people are reluctant to give up.

MT: Speaking for the moment as a local school board member, I think you're exaggerating, in a way that a lot of education administrators at the state and local levels love to hear, the negative impact of federal programs. Let me put it in this perspective: Among the growing negative pressures on local school district operation, the federal impact is one of the lesser. The impact of recession, the impact of taxpayer

resistance, and the impact of declining enrollments are all orders of magnitude more important to elementary and secondary education than the annoying red tape and occasional irrelevance of federal programs.

SH: In that context, then, Mike, what is the argument for a federal Department of Education? More bucks and more prestige for education? And what else?

MT: First, more bucks for a few selected purposes. Second, in a manner which I do not clearly see, is the idea that somebody at the national level must develop some modes for talking about national educational issues and for developing national educational leadership, in a fashion that includes, but extends beyond, the education professions.

The Role of the White House

SH: If we can make some links back to our previous discussion about the political forces in our society which might be mobilized to express educational interests other than the ones which are currently dominant in Washington, we will, perhaps, have made a contribution. We did talk about governors and state legislators, the Education Commission of the States, and other instrumentalities besides the ones headquartered here which, nevertheless, have or should have a potent voice in policy making.

Let's assume that we had a Department of Education of one scope or another. One of the questions that keeps recurring is: what is the appropriate linking mechanism of that cabinet-level Department to the President himself? There have been various practices in recent administrations: special assistants to the President, Domestic Councils, a revolving staff with programmatic responsibilities. What do you think is the most appropriate advice we can give to the President-elect in this regard?

CF: Well, I think we ought to start with the realization - - unwelcome though it may be - - that a President who doesn't want to pay attention to education will manage not to do so, regardless of organizational structure. Conversely, a President eager to pay attention to education can transcend any organizational impediments and contrive to do so. So, the first commandment of presidential education policymaking is that it takes on the image of the President and reflects his own interest in the subject. That said, the existence of a separate agency, cabinet-level or otherwise, for education, both simplifies and complicates the process. It simplifies it in that you don't have to contend any longer with a Department between the White House and the educational official. The White House has never known how to handle education policymaking with HEW. Does it call someone in the Secretary's Office? Or does it call the Commissioner of Education? That's never been clear and needs to get clarified. On the other hand, an agency head who thinks he is the government's chief education policymaker, answering to no one short of the President, will obviously want to speak for and to the President. That makes it harder for any staff members

who are given the education portfolio to carry it in an effective manner, particularly if the President decides that he really isn't very interested in education himself and certainly never wants to see that man or woman. It is safe to say that somebody in the White House staff will be responsible for education. Someone always is. How senior or junior is that person? How many other things is he also responsible for besides education? If you have a rather senior person within the White House hierarchy who is not responsible for much else besides education, then you have maximized the likelihood of reasonably open, rapid, and frequent communications between the White House policy process and the agency policy process.

TW: To the extent that the White House special assistant is senior and distinguished, you've minimized the stature of the new Secretary of Education because you have replicated his function with a senior White House advisor standing between the President and the new Secretary. The tendency over the last decade has been to miniaturize the Executive Branch in the White House, to have a White House assistant or Domestic Counsel office parallel to all the executive agencies. If we want to enhance the prestige and impact of education through a new Department, then that cabinet member should have direct access to the President.

MT: Let me take issue with Checker's history a little bit. In several of the years that I know well, there was nobody who carried the education portfolio in the White House. These are the years immediately following Checker's still lamented departure from that office. The lack of such a point of contact contributed both to the sense of drift in education policy within the Executive Branch and to the sense of alienation and frustration outside the Executive Branch. It was literally the case in 1971 and 72, for example, that one did not know whom to call in the White House to talk about education policy. Depending upon which topic you were talking about, you called a different person. If you were talking about revenue-sharing, you called the revenue-sharing staff officer at the Domestic Council. If you were talking about school finance, you called the staff officer in charge of seeking property tax relief, who was primarily a Treasury Department contact. If you wanted to talk about desegregation, you called White House special counsel. If you wanted to talk about educational research, you called yet another staff office. If you wanted to talk about other

educational matters, you probably had to call the White House operator and ask her who you ought to talk to, because there was no other way to find out.

It was in that period that drift and hostility set in; we've never really recovered. And I mark more than a little bit of that up to the fact that there wasn't anybody in the Executive Office of the President who thought that he or she was responsible for education policy. It's a terribly important function.

CF: Let's just add a point, which is that such a vacuum magnifies the power of the Office of Management and Budget and the education desk in OMB which, typically, does not make policy but simply tries, while saving money, to carry out whatever was the last policy it could remember having heard being made. You therefore tend to freeze in place whatever happened when there was White House attention to education.

RA: One advantage I could see for a visible educator/advisor in the White House is that he would be freer to stimulate discussion and debate in non-education constituencies - - someone who would be free to challenge and meet with businessmen and labor leaders and others in society who should be concerned about the quality of education and not feel as though he or she was running against the traditional constituency of an agency.

TW: We began this part of the discussion talking about the political forces, primarily organized teachers, pushing for a Department of Education. Now, we've come full circle and are discussing the lack of concern in the White House for education policy in recent years. Is that not because education is not a very high priority item on the President's domestic agenda? If you ask people what are the crises facing the nation, education is a long way down the list.

Education is a big budget item and a big industry; it has a large clientele; it is an important function of government. But as an issue that commands the President's attention, other than in controversies like busing, it is not salient at the presidential level.

CF: Then maybe it's prudent to ask how you staff the presidency so as to deal with the reality, i.e., if you take for granted that it's not going to be the President's top item each morning but that somebody at the White House should be paying attention to it, how do you organize

for that? I would still suggest a relatively senior person with education and a few related matters in his portfolio working, I hope, in tandem with the head of the education agency so that you have at least two people of reasonable stature in the Executive Branch who do pay attention to education even if the President doesn't.

MT: What's unique about the Office of the President is that you can help education a great deal with very little investment, essentially one or two staff people who can bring groups together, who can encourage the President to make useful suggestions as he speaks and moves around, and can give a sense of importance and optimism and encouragement to what essentially is being carried out in the local and state levels. But the people reflect the mood of the Presidency in given areas and it strikes me that you could have a very low interest in education and put in a billion dollars more and it would have far less impact than a President and a key advisor who spent time encouraging, stimulating, challenging, the whole education community. I would just think it would be shortsighted not to assume that leadership role.

TW: What impact of leadership can be demonstrated? Do we have any examples where a political leader has encouraged something in the field of education, without spending money or starting a new program, that has successfully served as a catalyst for new developments?

SH: Bob did not rule out the spending of money. He was talking about maximizing the impact.

RA: I'll give you one example, Tom. A couple of years ago, two weeks before the President's Ohio State address (August 1974), we got a call from the speech-writing team saying the President would like to focus, in part, on something in education. Did we have any ideas? Two days before he went, we were throwing out a few ideas and started talking about work and education, the need to begin a discussion between the education community and the world of work. That idea got thrown in without a great deal of detail and yet there have been literally dozens of conferences, research studies, speechmaking, books, and the creation of a whole new set of "experts", all because of that one speech. The President sure stimulated a lot with a little bit of effort.

MT: Isn't busing another example?

RA: Yes, an offhand remark at a press conference has the whole country wondering.

SH: In a more positive vein, I think that the leadership of Lyndon Johnson with regard to Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the student aid programs for the disadvantaged is an example of not only putting resources into education but really asserting what the nation's priorities are. In these two areas, it's almost beyond debate that America's priorities in education were basically changed, possibly for all time, but certainly for the past and next decade. It wasn't only the money, it was also the presidential rhetoric. This leads me to suggest that whoever is going to be that presidential senior advisor had better know how to use the bully pulpit of the Presidency with regard to communications skills, speech writing, and the rhetorical flourishes which always make news when they come from the Oval Office of the President and seldom make news when they come from other levels of the government.

TW: There is an important role for the President in legitimating and dramatizing what is a developing mood or trend in the society at large. I'm skeptical about the ability of a President or any political leader to intervene and create what is not to some extent already there. Lyndon Johnson and the compensatory/anti-poverty theme reflected a mood of the sixties that was not wholly of his creation. The response to President Ford's remarks on work and education is certainly related to the data on underemployed college graduates and the general state of the economy.

SH: There is an underlying assumption in what you are saying, Tom: that education is not very susceptible at the national level to stimulate new presidential initiatives and create new excitements. Yet, the public opinion polls that you cited indicating a lack of popular urgency about education also reveal that the people see education as an area they are willing to spend more for. Indeed, education is one of the things they most care about for their children. And, increasingly, as we become an aging population, education is of personal concern to them as well, in terms of their better use of leisure time and development of new job skills.

I think Checker spoke for me when he said, regardless of how we organize the federal interest in education, the basic question is: What are the value preferences of the President of the United States? This goes beyond bureaucratic organization and almost beyond political pressures. We know that in recent years the attentions of Presidents have tended to be centered on international affairs and military matters.

Whether the President of the United States will focus on education is very much a matter of basic value predispositions of the man rather than any type of organizational or political suggestion that we might make here. Perhaps we shall know more about that as the election campaign unfolds.

Participant Biographies

Robert Andringa (RA in text) is Minority Staff Director of the Committee on Education and Labor, U.S. House of Representatives, where he has been responsible for federal legislation on higher education since 1969. A member of various national commissions and task forces on educational policy and a respected speaker and writer, Bob maintains an active schedule of visiting educational institutions throughout the country. Bob has a doctorate in higher educational administration from Michigan State University.

Chester Finn (CF) is a Research Associate in Governmental Studies at the Brookings Institution, where he is examining federal higher education policy. Formerly Staff Assistant to President Nixon (1969 - 71) and Special Assistant to Governor Sargent of Massachusetts (1972- 73), "Checker" serves as a member of the National Council on Educational Research and is the author of numerous articles on educational policy. He holds a doctorate in educational administration from Harvard University.

Samuel Halperin (SH) directs the Institute for Educational Leadership of The George Washington University, which conducts a variety of programs to improve communications among educators and policy-makers and to strengthen the intergovernmental system of American education. Sam was Deputy Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare for Legislation (1966 - 69) and Assistant U.S. Commissioner of Education for Legislation (1964 - 66). He has served on House and Senate education committees and taught political science at a number of universities. He has a Ph.D in political science from Washington University.

Michael Timpane (MT) is the Director of the Center for Educational Finance and Governance in the Rand Corporation's Washington Office. As Deputy Assistant Secretary, Mike headed HEW's education planning office during the early 1970's. He has just completed four hectic years as President and a member of the Arlington (Va.) School Board. Last year and this, he also serves as director of studies for the Aspen

Institute's Program in Education for a Changing Society. Mike has earned graduate degrees from Catholic and Harvard Universities.

Thomas Wolanin (TW) is on leave from the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to serve as Staff Director of the House Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations. He was Congressman Frank Thompson, Jr.'s staff assistant for education during the consideration of the Education Amendments in 1972 as well as in the 1976 round, and he works on federal legislation for public employee bargaining. Tom is co-author of *Congress and the Colleges: The National Politics of Higher Education* (1976) and has contributed articles on education policy to a variety of journals. He received his Ph.D in Government from Harvard University.